UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CONF.191/BP/2
30 March 2001

Original: ENGLISH

Third United Nations Conference on the
Least Developed Countries
Brussels, 14 May 2001

OUTCOME OF THE PRE-LDC III WORKSHOP ON LDCs: BUILDING CAPACITIES FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Cape Town, South Africa, 21 - 23 March 2001

CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I.	Cape Town Declaration	2
II.	Agreed conclusions and recommendations	3

GE.*200105162*

ENG

I. CAPE TOWN DECLARATION ON LDCs: BUILDING CAPACITIES FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

We, the Ministers and officials of LDCs participating in the workshop on Building Capacities for Mainstreaming Gender in Development Strategies, held in Cape Town, South Africa from 21 to 23 March 2001, having noted that gender mainstreaming was not adequately covered in the first two Preparatory Committee meetings, hereby declare as follows:

1. Gender mainstreaming is an essential strategic component for poverty reduction, gender equity and empowerment of women in LDCs.

2. All efforts must be made to ensure that the above can be attained through effective partnership among different actors in the global community.

3. We strongly endorse the Beijing Declaration of September 1995 following the 4th World Conference on Women.

4. We strongly believe that the Programme of Action to be issued by LDC III should contain gender perspective as a cross-cutting issue.

5. We strongly believe that the empowerment of women in LDCs must be one of the major goals of Governments in partnership with the civil society. Hence, we urge national Governments to give the needed resources to national machineries for gender mainstreaming in all their developmental programmes.

6. We urge Governments, as well as development partners, to provide maximum support to this Declaration and to the implementation of the recommendations emanating from this Workshop.

7. We mandate the Chairperson of this Workshop to convey the contents of this Declaration and the recommendations to the Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries with a request to have them incorporated in the Programme of Action and urging their speedy implementation.

8. We request the Secretary-General of the United Nations to establish a Group of Eminent Persons in order to examine the best methods as to how the above goals can be attained and who should submit their report to the Secretary-General within six months after the Brussels Conference.

We thank the Government of South Africa for hosting this Workshop and pay tribute to Minister Mrs. Lindiwe Hendricks for skillfully guiding it to a successful conclusion.

We thank the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Japan and Sweden, as well as UNDP, the Industrial Development Corporation, Khula Enterprise, Petronas and Sun International, whose financial contributions made this Workshop possible.

II. AGREED CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The workshop on LDCs: Building Capacities for Mainstreaming Gender in Development Strategies was held on 21-23 March 2001 at the Mount Nelson Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa. It was organized by UNCTAD, hosted by the Government of South Africa and sponsored by the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Japan, Sweden, as well as UNDP and the Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa.

The Workshop was convened as part of preparations for the Third United Nations Conference for Least Developed Countries to be hosted by the European Union in Brussels on 14-20 May 2001. The primary objective of the Workshop was to highlight the link between gender, poverty reduction and economic development and the necessity to mainstream gender into LDCs' national policies and programmes. The following five themes were discussed: Poverty Reduction Strategies and Gender Equality; Engendering National Budgets and Development Strategies; Gender Equality and Trade; Engendering Statistics; and Micro-credit.

A. Poverty Reduction Strategies and Gender Equality

The Workshop on LDCs: Building Capacities for Mainstreaming Gender in Development Strategies:

- Acknowledged the important linkages between development, poverty reduction and gender equality. It recognized that while the status of women in LDCs has advanced in some important respects in the past decade, progress has been uneven, inequalities between women and men have persisted and women remain the vast majority of the poor. Major obstacles remain to fundamental mainstreaming of gender issues throughout all stages of national development policies strategies, programmes and resource allocation.

- Underscored the importance of mainstreaming gender in poverty reduction programmes like Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). The Workshop identified constraints that must be dealt with, including feminization of poverty, unequal status of women and men in terms of ownership and access to assets and decision-making, inadequate legal frameworks, harmful traditional practices and voicelessness of women.

- Noted that the effective representation and participation of women in all spheres of decision-making, including the political process at all levels, can improve accountability, transparency and consequently lead to good governance.

- Noted that, when they have the opportunity, women can be drivers of inclusive sustainable development.

- Reiterated the need for full and active participation of civil society organizations and other critical stakeholders, including women's groups, in the design and implementation of the development agenda.

Against this background, the following key recommendations were addressed to LDC Governments and development partners:

1. Promote gender mainstreaming as a strategy to reduce poverty, alongside other strategies such as those focusing on empowerment and vulnerability reduction. Women's and men's roles and responsibilities should equally be an integral part of national development policies, strategies and programmes, e.g. PRSPs and national budget processes, in order to ensure social justice and economic development.

2. Promote capacity building in gender mainstreaming at all levels, including reforms of institutional and legal frameworks.

3. Enhance women's full and equal participation in decision making at all levels.

4. Allocate adequate human and financial resources to facilitate the implementation of the commitments made at national and regional levels, as well as at international conferences.

5. In order to eradicate poverty, national Governments should promote and protect women's equal access to, ownership and inheritance of property and other productive resources.

6. Invest in basic economic and social infrastructure and services, such as health, prevention of HIV and other pandemic diseases, sanitation, shelter, education, water, energy, transport and other time-saving infrastructures which reduce women's and girls' domestic work load.

B. Engendering National Budgets and Development Strategies

- Budgets are national policy instruments with an important impact on people through their redistributive effects and creation of opportunities. Gender budgeting is a collection of methods that illuminate the allocation and impacts of budgets on women and men and is an important tool to mainstream gender in development strategies. Due to lack of knowledge of their importance,

and of human and financial resources to implement them, gender budgeting has been undertaken in very few countries.

Against this background, the following key recommendations were addressed to LDC Governments and development partners:

7. Build local teams of experts from both within and outside the Government in order to initiate and sustain gender budget activities. Create partnerships between the Government and the civil society to ensure transparency and accountability in the budget process. Strengthen advocacy and information dissemination on how budgets affect ordinary citizen.

8. Macro-economic policies, which underpin the budget allocations, should be analysed from a gender perspective with attention to both the revenue and expenditure sides of the budget. Gender analysis should be part of the whole budget cycle.

9. Impart gender analysis skills to policy makers, planners and to PRSP thematic group participants, and economic literacy skills to gender advocates to enable them to be effective in their work.

10. Relevant international organizations, including the United Nations and its agencies and international financial institutions, should assist upon request in the implementation of gender budgets in LDCs.

C. Gender Equality and Trade

- The Workshop acknowledged that trade policies and programmes are not gender neutral. As women and men occupy different economic and social positions, have different tasks and responsibilities as well as different access to private and public resources, they experience trade reforms differently, in both their roles of producers, consumers and providers of care to their families.

- Because of existing gender inequalities, women tend to be more vulnerable to the negative effects of trade liberalization and less able to benefit from the positive effects. For example, job losses in industries that are not competitive in the regional and world markets, due to increased availability of cheap imports, are more likely to affect small firms, most of which are run by women. Moreover, the removal of import duties also diminishes government revenues, which often leads to reduction of public expenditure (e.g. in education or health), if not replaced by other sources of finance. This has serious consequences for welfare and poverty, and has particular implications for women.

- Gender inequalities hamper economic development by preventing women from responding to the new trade opportunities. For example, women, despite constituting 70-90 percent of the workforce in agriculture, which is still the main sector in most LDCs, have very little control over land, credit, inputs, extension services and good infrastructure. These

inequalities greatly reduce their productivity and further decrease LDCs' share of trade in agricultural goods in the global market.

Against this background, the following key recommendations were addressed to LDC Governments and development partners:

11. Include gender specialists in the trade negotiation teams set up for national, regional and international negotiations and impart gender analysis skills to members of these teams. Ensure greater participation of women and the adoption of a gender perspective in the formulation of trade policies and in the WTO negotiations.

12. Provide the Ministries of Trade with gender sensitization training, gender analysis skills and knowledge on how to use gender sensitive trade statistics.

13. In partnership with the private sector and the civil society, identify those sectors that have the greatest impact from trade liberalization and formulate specific measures to alleviate the negative effects on women and to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities created.

14. Collect and make available information and statistics on which sectors women and men work and how they are remunerated, e.g. who are the cash crop farmers and food crop farmers, remunerated workers and unpaid family laborers, land-owners and land users, etc.

15. Develop specific tools, targets and indicators for a framework that systematically analyse the links between trade and gender.

16. International development partners should assist the LDCs in collecting gender sensitive trade statistics and undertaking case studies on the impact of international trade on women and men in LDCs, in particular on the poor.

D. Engendering Statistics

- Gender statistics refer to all statistics on individuals, collected by sex, with all variables and characteristics analysed and presented using sex as a primary and overall classification, so that all analyses and presentations are also sex-specific. With a few exceptions, this is not the case in practice; even where sex-specific data have been collected, it is not analysed from a gender perspective.

- Gender statistics is an important tool for evidence-based development planning. It is needed throughout the entire process of policy making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Against this background, the following key recommendations were addressed to LDC Governments and development partners:

17. The production of gender statistics must be the responsibility of the official statistical system at all levels, and cover sex-disaggregated data from different sources and all sectors. Moreover, all statistics should reflect gender issues.

18. Participatory and qualitative methods of collecting statistics to complement existing quantitative methods should be adopted with a view to raising consciousness and inspiring measures for change.

19. Existing data collected by sex should be analysed from a gender perspective, repackaged, presented and disseminated in a manner that is accessible to different types of users.

20. Train and promote awareness among producers of statistics regarding gender concerns in society, to enable them to collect and analyse gender sensitive statistics to present them in a user friendly manner.

21. Improve cooperation and regular dialogue between producers and users of statistics, which would enable them to arrive at a consensus on priorities, as well as provide a monitoring mechanism on data collection.

22. Continue to revise the 1993 United Nations system of national accounts in order to incorporate all, as yet uncounted, relevant women's unpaid labour and reproductive economy.

23. Assist LDCs to collect and analyse sex disaggregated data to include gender analysis into their national policy formulation by sharing of good practice experiences.

E. Micro-credit

- Micro-credit is one of the approaches dealing with the issue of poverty alleviation within the development agenda. The aim of micro-credit is to extend financial help to the poor by creating new opportunities and jobs for them. During the last two decades, the experience in a number of LDCs has shown that the poor, especially women, are good creditors and fund managers and have made a lot of progress. If the poor are given opportunities through micro-credit, they can overcome poverty.

- Experience has also shown that in order for the micro credit programmes to be successful, the poorest of the poor have to be specifically targeted. Moreover, there is general lack of supportive legal and institutional framework for micro-credit. Cultural practices have also constrained the overall success of these programmes in empowering women in a number of LDCs.

Against this background, the following key recommendations were addressed to LDC Governments and development partners:

24. Provide women with greater access to credit and other financial services to enhance their economic status and to improve household welfare.

25. Develop mechanisms for effective targeting of the poorest of the poor.

26. National Governments to put legal policy and institutional frameworks into place. These would be conducive to enabling micro finance institutions to effectively target the poorest of the poor, especially women.

27. Conduct capacity building and empowerment of all stakeholders involved in micro credit delivery systems.

28. Encourage sharing of experiences on micro-credit among LDCs and all relevant bodies.

F. The Way Forward

- National Governments, with support from international development partners, should allocate the necessary resources for the implementation of these recommendations.

- In order to ensure continuity, a focal point with all the necessary resources should be established within UNCTAD to follow-up on this Workshop. This is to ensure that its outcome is reflected in the preparations up to the LDC III Conference and also the implementation of its recommendations, in particular those related to trade and gender.